/31 cont./

865 693 Nevertheless, there are cases where the elder brother attempts to impose his authority and oblige a younger brother to obey his orders, building up his part. From ten years of age onward the relation between brothers and sisters becomes rougher and occasionally quarrelsome, but after passing puberty and initiation, when the girl has become a woman and the boy an adult, their relationship takes on a definite shape, to be reflected in the future friendship between the two and in the ties that will exist between the brothers and the children of the sisters, over whom they will exercise their authority and protection.

We have already described one of the aggressive acts between brothers on the part of the older toward the younger, in the theft of food behind the back of the mother or whoever represents authority /in the home/. There is another form of aggression which the younger child adopts in order to get what he wants from his elders and from his siblings: He throws himself on the ground, where he rolls and kicks, screaming and crying inconsolably. His mother punishes him to stop him from giving way to his bad temper, considering his action harmful because when big he might continue with his rages and while in that mood cause grave injury to his people and to himself. For in 152 865 reality when the Guajiro becomes furious, he goes completely out of his mind and commits deeds he would not dream of doing in his proper senses. If he cannot get his way he becomes so [762] angry /32/ that often he will hang himself, doing this in such a rage that he loses his instinct of self-preservation and even when he is half dead will insist on finishing himself off, so throwing the responsibility of his death onto the person who caused his bad temper. If his mother is unable to control these exhibitions of childish rage, it will continue with him during his youth and as a man will become increasingly worse, often causing him to leave home in the excess of his fury and giving rise to suicide when he is thwarted or opposed.

● 864 835 6. Delinquent acts that may appear among children about ten years old are the sexual relations between girls and their brothers when the latter are busy with their pastoral tasks and

/32 cont./

864 835 the girls go into the woods to round up the burros or for other chores. We know that if the mother learns of these happenings she immediately hands out punishment; we also know that it is considered very bad because of its prematurity, because of the act in itself, and because of reasons of blood relationship; but we do not know in what way punishment is meted out or the reaction and the social and family attitude when it becomes known. The fact is that the mother with girls of that age prevents their meeting their brothers outside her personal vigilance. The disregard of that prohibition even if it is not presumed that such a delinguent act 864 has taken place leads to punishment, because the mother knows 581 that these prepubertal relations will later have a decisive influence on the girl when she seeks marriage, as the future husband expects her to come virgin to him and the payment he makes for her includes such a concept. If she is not he has the right to claim a compensation payment and to obtain the legal refund of part of the animals he has paid; or they are obliged to admit it before the marriage, with the prospect that they will be denounced or the hoped-for /marriage/ purchase will not go through. In any case, with foreknowledge or without, the loss of her virginity reduces the value of a marriageable woman in the eyes of the men seeking her as wife.

861 There are punishments of various kinds. Some are corporal and consist of striking the child, and these are the most frequent. They slap them on the mouth when they are insolent when given an order or when they give a sharp answer to the father or mother. They are punched and kicked or are whipped with lassos or riding whips, with twigs from the woods or cudgels, but the mother generally beats them with a bunch of nettles when they commit any kind of naughtiness, such as throwing themselves on the floor and rolling around from temper, sneaking out of the house without permission, disobeying an order, etc. /33/ In order to punish them the mother tries to take them by surprise and catch them firmly by the arm or hand so that she may punish them before they can escape her. She beats their legs or shoulders with the nettles as these parts are usually bare. This punishment is very painful

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
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later, for he has been brought up always to try and make things right.

During her period of isolation a girl also learns how to satisfy her husband erotically and always to be ready, when he is excited. To retain his love she may employ magic as well as her own natural powers of attraction. Knowing that a woman loses some of her looks and attraction during pregnancy, wives often try, after having had several children, to hinder fertilization by taking certain herbal drugs and by magical means.

'Polygamy is permitted, is it not, Mauana?'

'Yes, a man can take several wives. As long as he pays the bride-price, no one can say anything, but her family would never allow a better-class girl to become the second wife of anyone. And you see, custom decrees that a Guajiro wife, whether the first or a concubine, must acquiesce if the husband takes a new wife. Similarly, it is considered that wives ought to live in peace and friendship. They must receive a new concubine cordially and all show their best side to the husband. They must help each other to watch the children and not display jealousy if the husband prefers one to the others.

'That is how it should be, but the reality is quite different. Very often the wives live in the same house, which naturally leads to conflict more easily than when each has her own hut. Jealousy or envy are common in these harems. Enmity and quarrelling are not infrequent, nor is actual fighting. The wives spy upon each other, destroy each other's things and make all sorts of scenes. One or other perhaps comes to hate the husband. It is said that a certain man, who shall be nameless, had noticed something of the sort and did not dare to be at home while a family feud lasted. An enemy could have bribed one of his wives to put poison in his maize beer.'

'That does not sound pleasant!'

'No, polygamy undoubtedly has its drawbacks!' Mauana agreed. 'I myself have only one wife, but several bed slaves,' he added with an artful look in his eye.

Even though all a man's marriages are considered legal,